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JEFFERSON DAVIS
President Confederate States
And Commander-in-Chief

Cadet U S Military Academy 1824
2nd Lt 1st U S Inf July 1 1828
1st Lieut Dragoons March 4 1833
Adj't Aug 30 1833 to Feb 5 1834
Resigned June 30 1835
Col 1st Miss Rifles July 18 1846
Hon mustered out July 12 1847
Sec of War Mar 7 1853 to Mar 5 1857

In Honor of
The Defenders
Of Vicksburg

286694

Dedication Ceremonies

October 13th, 1927.



GOVERNOR'S SALUTE

Music—"Tenting on the Old Camp Ground."

CALL TO ORDER

HON. LEMUEL F. RAINWATER,
President Mississippi Jefferson Davis Memorial Commission.

INVOCATION

REV. P. A. HAMAN,
Chaplain United Confederate Veterans.

Music—"Bonnie Blue Flag."

PRESENTATION OF MEMORIAL TO THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

HON. LEMUEL F. RAINWATER.

ACCEPTANCE BY THE STATE

HON. DENNIS MURPHREE,
Governor of Mississippi.

UNVEILING

CAPTAIN T. S. ADERHOLDT, Jackson Corps, 32nd North Carolina.
CAPTAIN WM. T. RIGBY, 24th Iowa Volunteers.
Z. WARDLAW, 22nd Mississippi.

ARTILLERY SALUTE

Music—"Dixie."

PRESENTATION OF MEMORIAL TO THE UNITED STATES

HON. JOHN SHARP WILLIAMS.

Music—"Star Spangled Banner."

ACCEPTANCE BY THE UNITED STATES

MAJ.-GEN. B. FRANK CHEATHAM,
Quartermaster-General of the United States Army,
Representing the Secretary of War.

Music—"Over There."

ADDRESS

U. S. SENATOR HUBERT D. STEPHENS.

BENEDICTION

RT. REV. THEODORE D. BRATTON,
Bishop of Mississippi.



IT IS said that certain ancient peoples, when building monuments to the heroes of their civil wars, used a stone so soft that the winds and rains soon obliterated all reminders of internecine strife. We Americans have done this differently. The United States to-day is full of enduring tributes to U. S. Grant and Robert E. Lee, to the Confederate Soldier and to the Union Soldier, erected neither as boasts of victory nor as lamentations of defeat, but to commemorate the civic and military virtues of this nation.

Our Vicksburg National Military Park surrounds the Heroic City. On this battlefield, from a marble dome set up by the State of Illinois, the patient eyes of Abraham Lincoln now gaze across a ravine and rest upon a bronze statue of his great antagonist, Jefferson Davis. To the mind of no true American does this recall the rancors of unhappy war.

For years many devoted women have urged that Mississippi should place such a memorial on the hills of struggle at Vicksburg. In this task they were assisted by Captain Wm. T. Rigby, Resident Park Commissioner, himself a combatant in the siege, and a veteran of the 24th Iowa Volunteers. More than half a century, however, elapsed, before a bill was introduced in the legislature by Hon. P. C. Canizaro, Hon. A. C. Anderson, Capt. T. S. Aderholdt, and Hon. Z. Wardlaw, which appropriated funds for that purpose.

After securing the generous approval of the United States, five Commissioners were designated to carry this Act into effect:

Hon. Lemuel F. Rainwater, President, of Sardis,
 Hon. J. C. Zeller, Vice-President, of Yazoo City,
 Captain T. S. Aderholdt, of Friars Point,
 Hon. Z. Wardlaw, of Utica, and
 Colonel Alexander Fitz-Hugh, Secretary, of
 Vicksburg.

Upon the resignation of Col. Fitz-Hugh, Mr. Harris Dickson, of Vicksburg, was appointed, and became Secretary.

Following their conferences with many sculptors the Commission decided upon a model submitted by Mr. Henry H. Kitson, who had already done such notable work as the Iowa State Memorial, now standing in the Park.

October 13th, 1927, was chosen for the dedication because it would occur during a Reunion of Confederate Veterans, and hundreds of old grey soldiers might be present to honor their departed chief.

On that brilliant October noon the sunshine glorified our battle hills, as with a benediction of peace, when the parade of United Confederate Veterans moved up the curving avenue and assembled to witness the unveiling. Sons and grandsons, veterans of the Spanish War and the World War, stood sturdily around their sires, beneath the Stars and Bars, the Stars and Stripes.

The indisposition and absence of Hon. L. F. Rainwater made it necessary for Mr. Harris Dickson to preside in his stead, as Master of Ceremonies.

The booming guns were hushed, the music died away, when the Master of Ceremonies rose and said,

"I regret to announce that Hon. L. F. Rainwater, President of the Jefferson Davis Memorial Commission, is unable to be with us. His duties devolve upon me. Please come to order.

It is fitting that the Divine blessing should be invoked by the chaplain of the United Confederate Veterans, a survivor of the gallant 22nd Mississippi Regiment, Reverend P. A. Haman."

INVOCATION.

By Mr. Haman.

"Almighty God, from everlasting to everlasting, God our Father, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, we would approach Thee at this hour most reverently. We thank Thee for our being. We thank Thee for the privilege of being born and reared in this momentous period of history, and in this free republic, the birthplace of religious liberty. We thank Thee for Thy wise and benign providences which have converted it from a wilderness occupied by savages, into the most highly civilized country of history. We thank Thee for noble men and women whom Thou hast used in giving us this priceless boon. We thank Thee for the eternal principles of Christianity, so efficient when applied to the development of the highest type of civilization. Help us to realize how essential are those precepts to the best good of mankind. Be with us in the future as in the past to guide and to bless us. We ask it in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen!

Master of Ceremonies:

"The Jefferson Davis Memorial Commission was chosen under the late Governor, Henry L. Whitfield. We were authorized to erect in the Vicksburg National Military Park a statue which would commemorate the life and character of the Confederate President, who was Commander-in-Chief of the Southern armies. This task, we believe, has been happily accomplished through the genius of Mr. Henry H. Kitson. Our completed work we now deliver to the Governor of Mississippi, Hon. Dennis Murphree."

ADDRESS OF ACCEPTANCE.

By the Governor of Mississippi.

"Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Nearly sixty-five years ago, a slim, smiling, seventeen-year-old boy, who had run away from home at the tender age of fifteen, to join the Confederate army, garbed in a tattered gray jacket, ran the full length of the railroad bridge on the Big Black River under heavy fire from the Union army, while half his company was surrounded and captured there. This boy, with other comrades, trudged into Vicksburg and for forty-seven days and nights under a rain of shot and shell, hungry and half-starved, his every moment a dangerous one, helped to put up that glorious defense of this city that has gone down in song and story.

Some of the brightest pictures on the wall of my memory, are of those happy hours, when as a little boy, I clung with bated breath to this man's knees, and heard him

tell the story of that epochal period in the history of this great nation; of how the cannon roared, the minnie balls screeched, and the mortars belched; of the burning buildings which illuminated the river, and the duels with the gunboats; of mule-meat steaks and days of famine, and finally of that day when the end came, and the banners were furled, and the proud city, sitting supremely upon its walnut hills, was surrendered.

My friends: That soldier boy of 1863 was my father.

In 1904, when Governor McLaurin sought about for some man who had been a member of the 4th Mississippi Infantry during that great struggle to come to Vicksburg and locate the exact ground and the lines occupied and held by that regiment during this titanic struggle, he chose that same man. To-day, over on the northern line of this beautiful park, there stands a series of granite slabs and markers located and placed there by that man who was to me above all men the greatest hero, and the most kind—my father.

For these reasons my friends, I am to-day most happy, supremely glad, to have this opportunity to stand upon this historic spot, and as the son of my father, and as the representative of two million loyal Mississippians, receive at the hands of this fine Committee, this beautiful statue.

A few days ago, in a beautiful city in far away Colorado, before a great audience of Mississippians, I had the pleasure of presenting a man who is the grandson, and who bears the full name of the great Chieftain of the Confederacy whom we honor here to-day, and when I called that name it was a beautiful thing to see the love and respect, the admiration and the esteem Mississippians have and hold for Jefferson Davis reflected in the welcome which they gave.

I shall not upon this occasion seek to recount the great deeds nor the wonderful accomplishments of Mississippi's most gifted son. This is not my task. Others far more fitted will tell that story.

Gentlemen of the Committee, you have performed well a pleasant task. This splendid monument is a testimonial of your love for Mississippi, as well as a tribute to the memory of a great Mississippian. It is a thing to which millions of sons and daughters of our fair state will point with pride and love, in days far in the future as they recount the deeds of the historic past.

I congratulate you upon this magnificent result of your efforts. I congratulate our state upon the wonderful accomplishments of her sons in the past, and I look with confidence to her future. Above all, I congratulate myself that I have the honor to be a son and a citizen of a state of such glorious history and traditions.

My friends, with love, affection, pride and admiration, in the name of the great State of Mississippi, I accept this beautiful statue.

I thank you."

As Governor Murphree concluded his address, the guns roared their salute, and the band was playing "Dixie" when three grey-haired warriors, one from North Carolina, one from Iowa, and one from Mississippi, unveiled the Memorial to Jefferson Davis.

American flags that had hidden the statue were now drawn apart, the self-same banner that Colonel Jefferson Davis had borne so triumphantly at Buena Vista, and the Confederate President stood revealed.

Then the Master of Ceremonies said:

"Having been accepted by Governor Murphree, this memorial now belongs to the State. To occupy a site in the National Military Park, Mississippi must transfer it to the Federal authorities.

At the mention of that name, Mississippi, either within or far beyond her borders, another name suggests itself, the name of one who is counted among the foremost of those who love the land and love its people. For many years he has served us, and served the nation. Because of his wisdom and fidelity we have honored ourselves by honoring him. No American, living or dead, has fought more consistently and persistently to maintain the best traditions of this republic.

As a full sharer in the reverence and affection that you bear him, I call upon the Sage of Cedar Grove, John Sharp Williams."

Hon. John Sharp Williams said:

"Mr. Chairman; Your Excellency; General Cheatham; Union and Confederate Veterans; Ladies and Gentlemen:

Somebody has said that the sublimest spectacle which can be presented by man to humanity is that of a 'great man greatly falling with a falling state.' Surely it may be said with historic truth, that Jefferson Davis presented this picture to his beloved Southland, and to the world. Whatever faults of temperament or policy critics may find in him, he indubitably possessed the virtues of sincerity, honesty, loyalty to friends and principles and a cause; courage to endeavor; fortitude to bear defeat and suffering; unvarying truthfulness and self-devotion. If these be the cardinal and foundation virtues for man to possess, or to

admire in other men during this earthly existence, as I think they are, they were all impact in Mr. Davis.

The Southern Confederacy had but one President. That 'storm-cradled nation that rose and fell,' itself went down in ruin and ashes seemingly, 'its people's hopes were dead,' even before the expiration of the six years term of office of that 'one chosen one.'

There is nothing in the character or bearing of that one for any son of the South, or of the North to be ashamed of.

There are many things in him, as in the history of that short and bloody struggle, on both sides, for all sons of both sections to commemorate as glorious and as worthy of the American people at their best.

It is harder for the successful majority of a people, once divided into angry and warring parts, to do justice to the political leaders of the defeated minority, than it is to praise its military and naval heroes.

The genius of Stonewall Jackson, the nobility of Robert E. Lee have long since received unstinted praise from former foes, as from all the world. Even Raphael Semmes, after deep and loud cursing, has had justice done his enterprise and intelligence as a 'Sailorman.'

Justice is beginning to be done, by Northern writers, to the character, ability, and memory of Jefferson Davis. Gamaliel Bradford—his antagonistic heredity and environment considered—has done it nobly well. Captain Schaff of the Northern army, in his 'Life and Personality of Jefferson Davis,' pays admiring tribute to him. The first book to come from the North, seeking to portray him as he was, and entitled 'The Real Jefferson Davis,' was written by Landon Knight, of Ohio. It pays a generous tribute to his private character and public record.

The Southern side of 'The War Between the States,' is as much a part of the history of our United States, as the Northern side of it.

It is a mistake of fact to say that the Southern States rebelled against, or even fought against 'The United States.'

The plain, palpable historical truth is that two groups of the theretofore United, but temporarily Disunited, and subsequently Reunited States, were at war with one another. The fact that, in order to avoid confusion in battle and otherwise, the minority group had per force to assume for their new union a new name and a different flag, and that the majority group naturally retained the old name has led to the confusion of ideas and of things.

Every drop of blood inherited by Jefferson Davis and by most of our soldiers, who fought under him, was of the blood once shed, or offered to be shed, for the independence of the colonies and the establishment of 'the old union.' He had himself been an officer in its Regular army and later, during the Mexican War, an officer in its Volunteer army. He retained to the day of his death an intense devotion to the memory of 'the old service.' He carried over this devotion to the old and voluntary union of all the States, to the new union, or Confederation, of his part of those States—'the Confederate States of America.' He became, by virtue of his office as president of this group, the 'Commander-in-Chief' of its armies and, officially therefore, one of its soldiers. Upon this fact and his ante-bellum army service rests the claim to erect here on United States property this monument—a claim generously accorded by the Federal Government of these States, against the major part of which he had waged relentless war in behalf of the independence of the minor part of them.

Waged war, relentless, until the fabric which he commanded had hopelessly collapsed and he himself had become a prisoner of war. After the first natural ebullition of war-passion and hate, he was unconfessedly but really treated as a prisoner of war. That is what his release on bail and the subsequent dismissal of the 'Treason' charge actually meant.

When helpless and shackled,—and then only,—did he cease the struggle against 'the stars in their courses,' and like Robert E. Lee,—also a prisoner, though on parole,—advised his followers to cease unavailing resistance and to reconcile themselves, as best they might, to the new order of things. Worthily had he borne his part in that brilliant and heroic Southern defense. Most worthily did he bear his part in that overwhelming defeat—worse than defeat—that collapse by exhaustion of all a people's resources, including the decimation of its man-power.

In every act and thought he had borne witness to the eternal truth that 'it is better to have loved and lost than not to have loved at all,' better to have fought and lost than not to have fought at all.

He had loved the old union of all the States; he had loved the new union of that part of the States to which his State had adhered; he had performed honest, brave, brilliant and enduring service for both.

In retirement—not pardoned and not seeking pardon—he sought to explain 'the why' and 'the what' of it all, in order that the motives, the deeds and suffering of those he had led might become a part of the understanding of the world; nor is his 'Rise and Fall of the Confederacy,' a book of small value, either as history, or as literature, or as constitutional law, though naturally written from the viewpoint of counsel for the defense.

His fate was not as fortunate as was that of the other Chief Magistrate of the other group of our American Commonwealth—his great antagonist, Lincoln—who died assassinated in the very afterglow of the hour of victory and before the radical part of his party could attempt his impeachment as they did attempt that of his successor—for trying, without his popularity, to carry out his policies.

American history will not be written accurately until it frankly records, that for a short period,—short in time, though long in suffering, heroic deeds and high courage—these States and this people had contemporaneously two governments and two Presidents—Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis. They were born in homes within present long distance artillery fire of one another—in Kentucky—a State which sought to be a 'neutral' State in a 'War Between the States'—a thing impossible—and succeeded only in seeing her sons fight and die on both sides.

The family of Davis, being slaveholders, when it migrated, went further South; that of Lincoln, being too poor to own slaves, when it migrated, went further North, where environment was more inviting to white labor. Both were of Southern blood. Each proved fitted to the environment, which directed and made destiny for him. Each devoted to the policies he came in time to espouse, and to the people, he came in time to love, all that was in him.

No two disunited and warring parts of a people ever furnished two opposing chieftains of sincerer purposes, cleaner life, or more persevering fortitude.

It is given to men to be true, if only they will; it rests with God to order results.

In that fierce war between the cause of community self-government and independence on the one side, and the cause of what had, by historical evolution, come to be 'the

sanctity of the Union,' on the other side, the cause of the one chieftain—Lincoln—could, hardly, by any fault of his own, however gross, have been lost, and the cause of the other could by no now conceivable virtue of his own have been won. All that either could do was to give himself—body, mind and soul—to the utmost,—for the right, 'as God gave it to him to see the right.' This both did—without stint.

No Southerner now would impeach the character of Lincoln; and no 'generous soul,' to use a phrase of Demosthenes, will now deny that Jefferson Davis is the outstanding American instance, in civil life, of 'a great man greatly falling with a falling State.'

He was worthy to be associated in his people's hearts, with 'the Sword of Lee,' with the military genius of 'Stonewall' Jackson, and with the enduring fortitude of that Southern Soldier, which 'with tattered uniforms; bare feet and bright muskets bore on their bayonets' for four years, the Southern cause. He was worthy to be associated in history with those other Americans who finally overwhelmed them.

He was 'a man faithful unto death.' Indeed, so prone was he never to desert a friend, a principle, or a cause, that his enemies in the South—and let it be remembered that he had bitter, though not many, enemies there—gave to his faithfulness the name of 'obstinaey.' Landon Knight even falls into this error. Courage at its best he had; physical, mental, political and moral courage; courage of initiative to dare, courage of fortitude to suffer. For him success did not entail recklessness, nor defeat despair.

He was great as a soldier, Buena Vista early illustrated it and his military counsels during the war, as General Lee himself testified before Congress, confirmed it. He was a

great Senator. He was a great War Secretary. He was at times a great orator, witness his Farewell Address to the U. S. Senate and the Richmond speech near the close of the war, which 'fired the Southern heart' to renewed effort.

In private life, in all its relations, he was as nearly blameless as mere man can be. Especially was he so in the difficult relation of master and slave,—the most difficult of all relations for the master. In his justness, humaneness and consideration for his slaves, he was exemplary. He bore that part of 'the white man's burden,' as only the noble white man can. The Northern writers whom I have cited, all bear witness to that, and all here in Mississippi, who knew him, knew that he was 'a good master.'

What was, in his mind,—because it is by what is in a man's mind that you must judge him—what was then in his mind, the Cause to which he so stubbornly sacrificed his health and for which he would so gladly have given his life? Was it slavery? Then it is indeed a 'Lost Cause.' But there are in God's providence, no lost causes—permanently lost—except unfit causes, just as there are in nature no survivals of the unfit.

Was secession the cause? It was only the allegedly 'constitutional remedy' resorted to, to assert the cause.

Behind all the talk about slavery as a condition and about secession as a remedy, there laid in the minds of the Southern men, and even more in the minds of the Southern women, of that generation, as anyone may know who will seek their feeling and thought in their private and public utterances, the cause of White Racial Supremacy.

That was in their minds, the real cause—the thing menaced. That cause it was which, in the Slave States, was thought—mistakenly, as we now know—to be inextricably involved in the maintenance of slavery, unless

abolition were accompanied by the deportation of the Negro race, and for that nobody was ready—South or North. Deportation spelt then to Southern minds, agricultural ruin. To Northern minds, national bankruptcy.

The cause of White Racial Supremacy, which was thought to involve, and does involve, white racial life, is not a 'Lost Cause.' It is a Cause Triumphant. It was never as safe as now since the Missouri Compromise discussion, which Thomas Jefferson himself an emancipationist—said 'broke upon his ears like the alarm of a fire bell in the night.' What war failed to avert, the slow but sure processes of human thought and experience—North and South,—under difficulties at times seemingly insuperable, have finally averted, and averted, let us hope, for good and forever.

The white man's family life, his code of social ethics, his racial integrity—in a word his civilization,—the destruction of which in the slave states was dreaded, as the involved racial result of the abolition of slavery without deportation, are safe. All the dire results, which had been seen at our very doors in Haiti, and San Domingo and other West Indies and in Mexico have been avoided by us. They were averted because, first: Of the shoulder to shoulder touch, the stern resolution, and the discipline, which four years of war and hardship had implanted in the old easy-going and pleasure-loving Southerners; and because, second: Of the respect for Southern courage and endurance, which the war had taught the Northern people, and because, third: Of the sympathy for the South in her humiliation and poverty under Negro and carpet-bag rule, which sympathy was at last aroused in 'generous souls' of late foes. How narrowly averted these dreaded results were and how dangerously and long the white man's civilization was menaced in the South few now realize.

My friends, this Man—this Jefferson Davis—was no pygmy among men; he was a giant.

Long may this bronze endure as a memorial to him and as a monument to the magnanimity of a Great People, reunited and never again to be disunited and determinedly oblivious of past hatreds and bloody arbitrament of differences.

This monument by the 'Father of Waters,' in the historic 'Siege City' of Vicksburg, on the soil of his beloved adopted State, to 'the Greatest Mississippian,' can neither add to nor subtract from his fame, but it can be and will be, a witness of the opinion of true men, that it is not success, nor failure, which measures the worth of a man, but that brave endeavor, honest purpose persevered in, and forgetfulness of self are the essentials, which fill the measure of God's demand, and give the standard for true men's judgments. May such ever be our rule of final judgment of one another in this 'Republic of Lesser Republics,' consecrated to one flag, one government, one civilization; now and forever."

The Master of Ceremonies:

"Mississippi desires to emphasize the fact that we celebrate an *American* occasion. Nowhere else could happen an event so paradoxical. At Vicksburg, Mississippi, Gibraltar of the South, we unveil this Memorial to Jefferson Davis, President of the *Confederate* States, upon a military reservation of the *United States*; and it is received by a Major General of the *United States*, representing the Secretary of War. To you sir, and to the world I say, that those grizzled fighting men who once followed the Bonnie Blue Flag, their sons and grandsons, their wives and daughters, are first of all *Americans*. There stand the grey Confed-

erates, and above them floats the banner of the living Union. This is an *American* occasion.

Nine years ago to-morrow, October 14th, a certain colonel, commanding our 104th Infantry in France was pushing forward an offensive north of Verdun. According to the citation for a Distinguished Service Medal 'his high courage and leadership' proved important factors in a glorious success.

To-day he comes to this hallowed battleground, to the very hilltop from which a Mississippi battery once hurled its flaming defiance. Beside him is that silent gun, now hushed and harmless. In its mouth the birds are nesting unafraid. To-day we are at the noontime of our peace, doing homage to the *American* virtues of loyalty, patriotism and courage, the qualities that mark such men as our distinguished guest, Major General B. F. Cheatham."

ADDRESS OF ACCEPTANCE ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES.

By Major General B. F. Cheatham.

"As the son of a Confederate soldier, I am deeply moved and greatly honored to be here to-day to pay tribute to the memory of a man whom the South loved and who occupies a distinguished place in American history. There are others who are more competent to tell you of his heroic efforts for the South, and of the intimate side of his life, but it seems fitting that I should say a word concerning the conspicuous services of Jefferson Davis to the Federal Government, which I represent to-day.

He was a graduate of the Military Academy at West Point in July, 1828, and was commissioned a Second

Lieutenant of Infantry in the Army of the United States. He served in the Black Hawk War, and later resigned from the Army in order to become a planter in this State.

He was a Member of Congress when war was declared against Mexico in '46. Resigning at once he was made Colonel of a regiment of Mississippians, which he commanded with marked success in the operations under Taylor in Northern Mexico. He was severely wounded at Buena Vista, but refused to leave his men. After the war he was appointed to the Senate and was later elected for a full term, but resigned in '51. In 1853 he was appointed Secretary of War and served four years in that capacity. His administration of the affairs of the Army was noted for the many improvements effected. He organized the Engineer companies which surveyed the routes of railways from the Mississippi to the Pacific Coast, increased the size of the Army, changed its arms and equipment, revised the system of tactics, and—most important of all—put the selection of officers on a merit basis without regard to political or party consideration.

After his term in the Cabinet, he was again elected to the Senate, where his ability and character made him a leader of his party and earned for him the respect and esteem of all—regardless of party affiliation. We are just now getting far enough away from the passions of the early sixties to permit the world to see this man in his true light. History must place him with our truly great soldiers and statesmen.

I am to-day the representative of Secretary of War Dwight F. Davis, who authorizes me in behalf of the United States to accept this monument in memory of that other distinguished Secretary of the same name. In doing so, as The Quartermaster General of the Army, who is by law charged with the care of our National Cemeteries and

National Military Parks, I promise that this beautiful contribution from the State of Mississippi in honor of one of her distinguished sons will always receive loving care and protection at the hands of the National Government."

The Master of Ceremonies:

"When John Sharp Williams retired to the quietude of his plantation, he was succeeded by a younger man, born amongst the hills of Union County, educated in our public schools and at our State University. He's a home product, made in Mississippi, and had already served his state with distinction as District Attorney, and member of Congress for ten years before being promoted to the highest deliberative body on earth. I take great pride and pleasure in presenting United States Senator Hubert D. Stephens."

ADDRESS

By United States Senator Hubert D. Stephens.

"A few years ago I heard Hon. Joe Cannon, of Illinois, say, 'The three greatest men this nation has produced are George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis.'

Coming from him, it was a splendid tribute to President Davis, and one worthy to be repeated, for it is not the utterance of a partisan of his,—rather the contrary. Mr. Cannon was a citizen of President Lincoln's state, a great admirer of his, and an ardent Union man during the war between the states.

Why, then did he rank Jefferson Davis as one of the three foremost Americans? The only answer is, BECAUSE IT IS A FACT.

In voicing this estimate of that great man, Mr. Cannon showed not only that he had studied the lives of the leaders of the nation and the history of our government, but that he was free from the meanness of prejudice and had the power of recognizing true greatness. Thus, he gave evidence of greatness himself.

Jefferson Davis' life was not a small one. He wrought in many fields. As a young man, he set before himself high standards of learning, dignity and integrity. He laid his foundations broad and deep. He gathered that strength and formed that courage of which victory is born. In years of retirement, while in the vigor of young manhood, he enlarged and strengthened those foundations. So, when called upon to take part in the large affairs of the State and the Nation, he was ready for any task.

As a soldier, he displayed courage and military genius that attracted attention. In the Mexican war he won a reputation second only to the Commanding General, for it was his valiant service, while wounded, that saved the day at Buena Vista. Gen. Taylor, in his report, said, 'His distinguished coolness and gallantry, and the heavy loss of his regiment on this day, entitle him to the particular notice of the government.'

When he entered political life, at once he made a splendid impression. He became a leader in any body of which he was a member. He had strong native ability that had been cultivated and trained by studious habits; he possessed that dignity that fails to invite familiarity, but does not lend itself to discourtesy; he owned the highest moral character; and he had as strong sentiments of devotion to his country as ever resided in the breast of any American citizen. Therefore, it was not strange that President Pierce invited him to a place in his Cabinet.

As Secretary of War, he made a record that has not been surpassed by any man who, before or since, has occupied that high position. Forty years after the war, General Carl Schurz, who had been a general in the Union army and a member of the United States Senate from Missouri, wrote of him, 'I had in my imagination formed a high idea of what a grand personage the War Minister of this great republic must be. I was not disappointed in him.'

He had intimate knowledge of the needs of the army; and he revised the regulations, introduced new tactics, and made many improvements. He built an aqueduct to supply the District of Columbia with water, and superintended the extension of the Capitol. Surveys were made to find a suitable route for a Pacific railway, and many recommendations were made for internal improvements.

His was a practical mind, and he was interested in building up the whole country. He played no favorites; he loved every foot of American soil. Whatever might advance the welfare of the people, was of supreme interest to him. In after years the cause which he led was sorely affected by the results of his labors during his term as Secretary of War. This is an answer to the charge that has been made that, even then, he was looking forward to the disruption of the Union. That is the vilest slander, for no citizen ever labored more arduously and sincerely for the good of the whole country.

In the Senate, he made good use of his talents and became a recognized leader of that body. No man ever brought to it a truer patriotism, a statesmanship more philosophic and farseeing. His clear and lucid logic convinced; his eloquence charmed; his sincerity and courage of conviction impressed deeply. Therefore, he exerted powerful influence, and his reputation extended to every section.

There was no more commanding figure in the nation. When the Confederacy was organized, his talents, decision of character, and his strong advocacy of States Rights made him its natural leader; and he was its first and only President. It is not my purpose to review his administration as President. Perhaps he made mistakes; his was a superhuman task. But it is quite unlikely that any other could have been found who would have done better than he, if nearly so well.

He did not want war; he exerted every effort to prevent it. Through many years he had stood for a great principle. He believed in the Constitution; he loved the Union. He advocated States Rights because of this belief and this love. All his efforts were for civic liberty and the recognition of constitutional rights. He consented to secession and accepted the gage of warfare only when no other course could be taken.

For many years after the government was organized, the right of a state to secede was never questioned. Indeed, it was conceded, and was seriously threatened in New England. Later the right was disputed, and the question was settled by the result of war. Shot and shell and sword, rather than the terms of the Constitution and the intention of the framers of that great instrument, determined the proposition. Thus, in effect, was the Constitution amended.

Even the victor in the conflict conceded the right to secede after Appomattox. This concession lies in the failure to prosecute President Davis for treason. After being confined in prison for two years and then held under bail for another year, he was released for the reason that it was well understood that he was guilty of no offense. No well-informed man will argue his guilt to-day. It is now recognized that he was a martyr who suffered for his con-

victions and for his devotion to a principle that was a part of the SUPREME LAW of the land.

Albert Taylor Bledsoe, once a professor at the University of Mississippi wrote a book, the subject of which was, 'Is Davis a Traitor? or Was Secession a Constitutional Right Previous to the War of 1861?' The argument was absolutely unanswerable, and Mr. Davis was not brought to trial, for his bitterest enemies knew that he had committed no wrong.

While no court would have convicted him, yet he was punished by being denied the rights of citizenship. Guiltless though he was, he became the victim of the mob spirit; innocent as he was, he was made the vicarious sufferer for a soldiery and citizenship that sacrificed so much and so willingly for conviction and principle.

But, through it all, he remained a man of heart and courage. His spirit was unbroken. He was strong in the consciousness of rectitude. In his last public address he said, 'It has been suggested that I should apply for pardon, but repentance must precede the right of pardon; and I have not repented. I deliberately say that if it were to do over again, I would do just as I did in 1861.' I admire and love him the more for the statement.

Nor was his spirit spoiled by hate and bitter memories. He loved the whole country before the war. His love was ever unshaken. In that same speech, delivered shortly before his death, he said, 'Our people have accepted the decree; it therefore behooves them, as they may, to promote the general welfare of the Union, to show to the world that hereafter, as heretofore, the patriotism of our people is not measured by the lines of latitude and longitude, but is as broad as the obligations they have assumed and embraces the whole of our ocean bound domain.'

'I challenge the judgment of history when I say, no people were ever led through the fiery struggle for liberty by a nobler, truer patriot; while the carnage of war and the trials of public life never revealed a purer and more beautiful Christian character.' This was the challenge of Senator Ben H. Hill, of Georgia. I make it mine.

He was pure and above reproach in every detail of his life. In the region of high sentiment he was pre-eminent. All his actions were based upon the belief that it is faith, honor, conscience and intelligence on which rest the blessings of free government and the hopes of mankind. He believed that while greatness is somewhat of the intellect, it is more of the disposition, of the heart. He read and studied his Bible, and loved and served his God and his fellowmen. It can well be said of him, 'No country ever had a truer son, no cause a nobler champion, no people a bolder defender, no principle a purer victim.'

Stars may fall from the heavens. Eclipses may darken the sun. But as long as men and women shall respect, honor and revere purity, integrity, loyalty to conviction, and unselfish sacrifice for principle, the name of Jefferson Davis will be enrolled as one of America's greatest sons. And as the centuries pass, that name will shine with ever increasing lustre."

Master of Ceremonies:

"The Benediction by our beloved Bishop Bratton."

THE BENEDICTION.

By the Right Reverend T. D. Bratton,
Bishop of Mississippi.

"Oh Almighty God, by Whose providence the history of Nations is guided, and great leaders raised up as Thy servants in the crises of national life; by Whose wisdom the honest differences of men are composed for the highest good of Thy people, gathered here in the Vicksburg National Military Park, dedicated to the memory of contending armies of patriots now rapidly assembling in Thy bivouac of love and peace, and facing the Memorial of the great Lincoln, we pray Thee accept this emblem of a people's grateful memory of their beloved leader, Jefferson Davis.

We invoke Thy blessing upon it, that it may fulfill the lofty purposes to which it is dedicated, as a memorial to a great statesman and an inspiration of life to the posterity of his beloved people. Grant that the generations who shall visit this memorial may be inspired by the example of the fearless soldier, the wise statesman, loyal to his country and to the covenant of the union of states, magnanimous in his relations with all men. Bless them with the blessing of power whereby Jefferson Davis was ever Thy true, self-sacrificing son and servant, and humbly devoted follower of his Saviour and Master, Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And the blessings of God Almighty the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost be amongst you and remain with you always."